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Workers and war.

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WORKERS AND WAR

BY

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PRICE ONE PENNY

(Proceeds to be given to the Soldiers' and Sailors' Fund)

Frontispiece]

A Cartoon which did its work at the Belgian Elections of 1912.

(See note 7 on p. 22 of this pamphlet.)

This is what the Liberals have been wanting for the last thirty years!

This is what we Conservatives want!

[Reproduced in *De Trommel* for March 1st, 1914, with an apology for the Conservative change of attitude towards National Defence.]

Workers and War

An Awakened People.

Now is the time to attempt to make the British people understand what the working-class leaders on the Continent think about war and preparation for war. For our wage-earning classes are now roused, and will face facts which they have too long ignored. It has not been their fault if they have not seen these things long ago; the blame lies mainly at the door of their official leaders. This spring, when the delegates from the Continent came to the Trades Union Congress at Bradford, one of the foreign speakers was Vandervelde, the Belgian Socialist leader, who has now been chosen to present his country's case before the United States of America. One passage of Vandervelde's speech at Bradford created a half-scandalized amusement among the audience. He told his British friends, in blunt but friendly words, that it would do them no harm to introduce more intelligence into the Labour Party. A Swiss Socialist, with whom I was conversing only a fortnight before the outbreak of this war, remarked to me that British Trades Unionism was still running almost on the old lines of fifty years ago, and that its worst weakness was its conservatism. British Labour Leaders are at the present day almost incredibly ignorant of what is being done on the Continent; but they remain perfectly well satisfied in their ignorance, and therefore the rank and file of the Labour Party suffer too often from the blindness of their leaders.

The Workers and War.

This extreme insularity, this wilful ignorance on the part of the leaders, has very deeply influenced the British Labour attitude towards War. Forty years ago, John Stuart Mill was obliged to protest against the attitude of British Labour Leaders, who wanted this country to plunge into the Franco-German war because France had just set up a Republican Government. Our present Labour Leaders have fallen back from this attitude into its extreme opposite; during the last generation they have preached non-intervention at any cost. They have tried to get rid of war by pretending to themselves that war was a mere bogey. Apart from the attempt to organize an international strike against war—a policy which even the International Arbitration League was obliged to condemn as premature and unstatesmanlike—the present Labour Leaders have pursued no definite policy, beyond a vague cry for disarmament. Even here they have not always had the courage to fight for their opinions; many of them have just preached reduction to their constituents, and then voted for the Army and Navy supplies like their brother M.P.'s. Though so good a Liberal as Mr. Chiozza Money offered to debate the question with any M.P. who had the courage of his convictions—with any M.P. who would not only *talk about* disarmament outside, but also *vote for* disarmament inside the House—I believe I am right in saying that his challenge was never taken up. So far as any steady principle may be said to underlie the attitude of modern British Labour Leaders towards military questions, it may be summed up very briefly. They have said, "Ignore war, and you will not have war. Only avoid speaking about it, only avoid thinking about it, and it will never come. It is a mere bogey."

Facing Facts.

We all see now that war is no bogey, but one of the hardest facts in this hard world. In the face of the nonsense which certain officials of the Independent Labour Party are still talking about Belgium, let every worker ask himself this common-sense question, "What would have happened to Belgium if she had accepted the Kaiser's demands?"[1] If she had disarmed her own soldiery, and suffered the Germans to march through her territory, where would she have been now? Let us first put the question as if we ourselves had been the party mainly concerned. What would the voters of this country say to any Government which allowed a million men, such as we know the German soldiery to be both in theory and practice, to march through this land of ours? I hope and believe that a great many published tales of German military atrocities are false or exaggerated; but the things that we know for certain are quite enough. We know that some at least of these million soldiers would be frequently drunk with liquor, and that the mass of them would be drunken with those outrageous ideas which made the Zabern business possible even in times of peace. How can a million of such soldiers, inflamed with all the spirit of war, urged on by dire necessity, and speaking an unintelligible language—how can such a horde press forward through a foreign country without doing irremediable harm? Even though the Belgian Government had promised peace, was it to be expected that no single Belgian citizen should rebel? that no outraged father or husband should fire one single hasty shot in revenge for some intolerable wrong, or that no man should resist when a foreign soldiery commandeered his cattle and his corn? Yet, for every irresponsible shot thus fired, the Germans would have exacted the same kind of revenge which we have seen now on a larger scale at Louvain. And even supposing that, by a miracle, the Belgians themselves had avoided all conflict with the German army, how about the French? In granting a free passage to one combatant, Belgium would have broken her own faith. By obeying Germany she would have forfeited her position as a neutral no less hopelessly than she has now forfeited it by resisting Germany. While the Germans were pouring in at one side, the French would have poured in at the other; and the tide of war would inevitably have swept backwards and forwards over Belgian territory. From the moment that Germany determined to violate Belgian neutrality, that unhappy little country was irremediably doomed to all the horrors of war. Whether she chose to resist Germany, or to give way to Germany, she was equally doomed.

German Statesmen and their British Apologists.

And as to Germany's determination to violate Belgium's neutrality, there can be no possible doubt now. On July 31st the German Foreign Office refused to promise that Belgium should be spared, because such a promise "could not but disclose a certain amount of their plan of campaign." Moreover, they asserted "that certain hostile acts have already been committed by Belgium" (White Book No. 122). On Aug. 1st the German Ambassador in England "asked me [Sir Edward Grey] whether, if Germany gave a promise not to violate Belgian territory, we would engage to remain neutral" (British White Book No. 123). So much has been made of this document by Mr. Keir Hardie, and by a few

other persons equally impenetrable to reason, that it is worth while dwelling on it for a moment. Firstly, the Ambassador did not pretend that he had authority from his Government to conclude any terms. His superior, the Foreign Secretary, had already refused to guarantee Belgian neutrality the day before (July 31st). Under these circumstances, the Ambassador's question to Sir E. Grey was simply an attempt to make Britain commit herself in the dark, while Germany was refusing to commit herself even in the daylight. For (as so steadfast a Liberal and Pacificist as Dr. Holland Rose has pointed out) what did the Ambassador's offer amount to in plain English? He said in effect, "What will you give us, if we promise now that we will not break our own solemn written promise?" What is the commercial value of a business man's promise by word of mouth, to the effect that he will not break the solemn promise to which he long ago set his signature on paper?[2] Could a man answer more prudently and more politely than Sir Edward Grey did?—"All I could say was, that our attitude would be determined by public opinion here, and that the neutrality of Belgium would appeal very strongly to public opinion here." In plain words, "The British Government must act as the British public desires; and the British public is not likely to repudiate its own engagements towards neutral Belgium." Sir Edward Grey knew perfectly well that Germany had already declared war upon Russia and France, in spite of all our efforts to settle the matter in Conference. He knew also that, even while the German Ambassador pretended to negotiate, German troops were already massed against Belgium; and he probably knew, what we know now, that on this very day of the Ambassador's question, on this very 1st of August, German troops had violated neutral territory. All that they desired was to play with us a little longer, and thus to gain a few more days for military preparations.

The Belgian Workman.

Mr. Keir Hardie cannot see this plain fact, because he does not wish to see it. To him, this quarrel is simply a case of "six of one and half-a-dozen of the other." Britain is at war with Germany, and therefore there is practically nothing to choose between the two antagonists! As he puts it in the *Labour Leader* for August 27th, "Our being in the war is a matter of the free choice of our rulers, who appear to prefer that Russia should become the domineering power of Europe." A similar assertion was made in the accompanying circular from the Executive Council of the Independent Labour Party, which repeated that "Great Britain is not at war because of oppressed nationalities and Belgian neutrality."[3] Finally, in a letter to the *Daily Citizen* (September 4th), Mr. Keir Hardie writes: "*By and by we shall learn what our comrades on the Continent are doing;* meanwhile let us remember that Germany, France, and Belgium are all *threatened* with invasion, of which *we run no risk*." Therefore (he explains) the Independent Labour Party must refuse to join in with all the other parties (including the Trades Unions and the Parliamentary Labour Party) in their non-party national recruiting campaign! Let the reader specially mark the words I have italicized. The words "*we run no risk*" are, of course, just a piece of wilful ignorance—the ignorance of a man who has repeated the parrot-cry so often on political platforms that he can no longer get

it out of his head. But let us try to imagine the state of mind of a member of Parliament who, on the 4th of September, can solemnly ask us to "remember" that France and Belgium are "*threatened* with invasion!" Do we see in this sentence the amiable moonshine of a man who lives habitually in some higher world of imagination, and who therefore can't see the brutal facts that stare us all in the face? Have we here the ideal Internationalist? No We have here a man habitually ignorant of all Continental democratic opinion, ignorant even of his own ignorance, and lacking all sane imagination that might correct this native ignorance. We have here a mere dried-up shell of a party politician, not even inspired by one spark of true International feeling at the bottom of his heart.

For the core of Internationalism is this: that all honest workmen are brothers; and that, if there must be a fight, the workman's true part is with his fellow-workman, whatever his country may be, against the oppressor, whatever *his* country may be. The Belgian miner is as truly Mr. Keir Hardie's brother as the Merthyr miner. If his Internationalism were even skin-deep—if it were more than the mere smudge of political rouge which he puts upon his cheeks for platform purposes—how could he forget his brotherhood with Belgium at this moment? The Belgian working classes, who asked for nothing but to be left in peace, are now being robbed, ruined, and killed by hundreds and by thousands. It is the greatest tragedy that has befallen any proletariate for the last hundred years. It has been going on for more than a month; but, on Sept. 4th, Mr. Keir Hardie knows only that Belgium is "threatened with invasion . . . of which *we* run no risk;" and he therefore utters a Pecksniffian hope that British Socialists will lift no finger to reinforce these misguided British soldiers who are shedding their life's blood in defence of Belgian workmen. The worst enemies of democracy have long been proclaiming, to a world that is only too credulous of evil, that Internationalism was only half delusion, half hypocrisy, and that its leaders were mere platform humbugs. They have assured us that, under his fine pretences, the Internationalist would always put his party before the state, and his own crank or his own self-interest before the party. It has been left to Mr. Keir Hardie to prove that there is too much justice in this cynical estimate. Even those who had least trusted the German Kaiser were hardly prepared for what he has shown us during the past month. Even those who were least inclined to take Mr. Keir Hardie at his own valuation, have yet been astounded at this unconscious betrayal of his narrow mind and his want of true feeling.

Half-wilful Ignorance.

"By and by," writes Mr. Hardie, "we shall learn what our comrades on the Continent are doing." These words do as little credit to his head as the other words do to his feelings. It would be difficult to find a better illustration of the childish and parochial ignorance of the average British Labour M.P. For years German Socialists have proclaimed, as their leader Bebel proclaimed, that they would try their hardest to avoid war, but that, when once war was declared, they would fight with as much determination as any other German. Jaurès, in the name of the French Socialists, declared equally plainly that all would fight desperately for France if France were attacked. French

and Belgian Socialists actually joined their respective national Ministries when this present war broke out; and the Socialist parties officially proclaimed their solidarity with their fellow-countrymen. Haase did indeed make an academic protest in the German Reichstag; yet he and his fellow-Socialists not only voted the war credit a few minutes afterwards, *but actually shook the Kaiser's proffered hand, in token of their unity with him.* Liebknecht, who was at first reported to have been shot was afterwards reported to have become a militarist himself, to the extent of re-engaging as a volunteer in the German Army.[4] Dr. Franck, who will probably rise some day to the leadership of the party, has been wounded in battle. We know that German Socialism is to some extent protesting still: we have every reason to hope that it may prove a potent influence for peace at some future date, if the war goes against the Kaiser; but, meanwhile, Socialist bullets and Socialist bayonets are helping to stave off the Kaiser's defeat. The struggle between Nationalism and Internationalism, in the last days of this July, can hardly be called a struggle at all. At the first serious pinch, Continental Socialism declared itself frankly Nationalist. That Internationalism will be one of the great forces of the future, I, for one, am convinced. But it is blindness not to recognize (as Mr. Keighley Snowden now frankly confesses) that Internationalism was found this year to be hopelessly unripe for its task.[5] And our admiration of Mr. Snowden's present frankness need not blind us to the fact that a little first-hand knowledge of foreign Socialism would amply have prepared him and his friends for this sudden and painful discovery. The Writing on the Wall was plain enough: but British Labour Leaders not only ignored it, they almost gloried in their ignorance. Mr. Hardie imagines that he is taking up a statesmanlike position when he says, "By and by we shall see what our comrades on the Continent are doing." He might as well say, in the same solemn and judicial tone, "By and by we shall learn whether the sun is daily rising and setting in Germany." As Vandervelde told him plainly in the spring of this year, and as *l'Humanité* would have told him if he had taken the trouble to read that excellent organ of French Socialism, Continental democrats are half-pained, half-amused at this complacent insularity of British democracy. Men like Mr. Goldstone go their own way in steady endeavours to raise the workman's position by measures of constructive Socialism; and the public will not expect, from such Labour Leaders as are doing this kind of solid unostentatious work, any great familiarity with what may be called the Foreign Politics of Labour. But, meanwhile, the greatest noise is made by the men who are most hopelessly and most unpardonably ignorant. These are the sort who crow their loudest when they shut their eyes. Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. John Ward, Mr. Philip Snowden, Mr. Fred Maddison, Mr. Bruce Glasier—men who have talked most frequently and most noisily about Continental Democracies and Militarism—have all made public assertions which can only be pardoned on the plea of gross and unconscious ignorance. And, in mentioning these men by name, I will give the best possible pledge for my own sense of responsibility. To any one of these men, or to any deputy officially appointed by him, I will give three pages at the end of this pamphlet for the exposure of any mis-statements which he may think I am making. And, after replying myself in not more than three pages, I will give him the last word. He shall have a final page entirely to himself, on

the understanding that he raises no fresh point, but simply discusses what has gone before. If I am wrong in my facts, I am here offering all possible facilities for my exposure. But I have little hope that any of these gentlemen will accept my offer, either personally or by proxy. Every one of them, at the bottom of his heart, has just enough suspicion of his own ignorance. Each has a bad conscience in this matter, and conscience doth make cowards of us all. They know themselves a little better than the public knows them; they know that they have to shut their eyes in order to crow their best; and it is very doubtful whether one of them will risk himself in any discussion which turns upon actual questions of fact. A politician can always survive any exposure so long as he takes good care not to expose himself. And, whatever they may have been in earlier days, these men whom I have named are now politicians to the very marrow of their bones. Their attitude towards truth is the politician's attitude: "Let us work all convenient facts for all they are worth, or a little more; let us drop all inconvenient realities like a hot coal." One of them has even expressed openly, in public debate, his approval of Disraeli's cynical maxim: "Never retract, never explain, never apologize!"

The Mind of the Continental Socialist.

I spent my last Easter holiday in Belgium, interviewing prominent Radicals and Socialists about their recent National Defence Act. Neither my hosts nor I guessed how terribly real this question would become before the summer was out; but this gives all the more significance to the following report, of which I give the original French in Appendix A, with the names of the gentlemen who vouched for its accuracy. Among these the reader will notice that of the Socialist Deputy, Edouard Anseele, who, with Vandervelde, was among the four leaders deputed to sign the recent "Manifesto to the *Internationale* from the French and Belgian Socialist Parties."[6] I had vouchers for its accuracy from working-men also, including the compositor, proof-reader, and clerk through whose hands it passed in the Socialist printing establishment at Ghent:—

"For more than thirty years past the Liberal party in Belgium has been demanding *compulsory military service on a general national system.*

"This claim formed part of the Liberal platform at the last elections (1912), but the Conservatives then fought against it as hard as they could.

"However, when the Conservatives kept in power in 1912, they were obliged to take a different view; and it was they who passed the law for Compulsory Military Service, with exceptions for religious reasons. Part of the Liberal Opposition gave their support to the Government, while protesting against unjustified exemptions from service.

"**The Socialist party also accepted *the principle*, while demanding some very important modifications (six months' service, democratic promotion, etc.) In short, the ideal of the Socialist party is 'the nation in arms' on the Swiss model. But, if once they can get this, the Socialist party have not the least idea of abolishing the principles of (1) compulsion and (2) universality. They advocate the Swiss system *as a***

minimum, **until universal arbitration and disarmament shall have come within the range of practical politics. They agree with the Liberals that, so long as any kind of army is necessary, that army must comprise** *the whole population*, **with necessary exceptions for physical incapacity, or young men on whom a whole family depends.**

"This law, once passed, has met with no serious opposition *on principle;* the whole country has taken it quite quietly, apart from the Socialist opposition, which is based on their system of 'a nation in arms' on the Swiss model.

"It must be specially noticed that no *Liberal or Socialist* Trade Union has contested the *principle* of the law. Such opposition as there has been, has been from Conservative Unions.

"In fact, Conservative Associations, whether of the middle classes or of workmen, have fought all through against the system of general military service; and, so far as they sank their opposition in 1912, it was only because the force of circumstances was too great for them, as their representatives declared in Parliament."[7]

The words here *italicized* were italicized in my French original to mark the importance attached to them both by my informants and by myself. **The paragraph in thick type represents the ground which is common to Belgian and French Socialism.** From Ghent and Brussels I went on to Paris, where I was prevented from seeing Jaurès by the stress of his electioneering campaign, but was able to secure an interview with M. Albert Thomas, his close friend and fellow-Deputy, who was one of the official signatories of the French Socialist Manifesto when this war broke out. M. Thomas assured me that this principle admitted by the Belgian Socialists (and which I have here printed in thick type) was held by their French brethren also. Only one man, among those whom I interviewed in Paris, refused to endorse it; he was an extreme Syndicalist, who would have abolished all armies, but who also waged equally implacable war upon all systems of parliamentary representation or government! M. Thomas assured me also that the well-meaning British pacificists, who imagined Jaurès to be an opponent of the principle of compulsory military service, could not have taken the trouble to read his book on that subject; and, further, that their attitude betrayed ignorance of the real meaning of the campaign against the Three Years' Service in France. I quoted (without naming the author) some wild assertions which Mr. Philip Snowden had lately made on this subject. Albert Thomas smiled indulgently, and shrugged his shoulders. If Mr. Snowden and other British Labour leaders have been taken aback by the attitude of Continental Socialism since this war began, this is only due to their own disgraceful and (it may almost be said) to their wilful and deliberate ignorance of facts which have long been staring them in the face.

Such ignorance seem almost incredible. I am quite aware that the prejudices of my readers—for I write for working-men—will be dead against me. Where I oppose my word to Mr. Philip Snowden's, they will be inclined to see a Capitalist attack upon Labour; though Mr. Snowden's income is probably at least three times as large as mine, and I would willingly become a Socialist to-morrow if I believed the world ripe for anything more revolutionary than definite schemes of constructive Socialism, such as the National Insurance Act and the

Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission. The initial prejudice, however, will be dead against me; but many, I know, will begin to draw their own conclusions when they see that men like Mr. Snowden decline to face the facts here advanced. They will ask themselves whether these facts are not vital to any true comprehension of International Labour Politics. They will want to know why, among our thirty-nine Labour Members in Parliament, there was not one who had discovered these things; or at least not one who, having discovered them, had the courage and the honesty to let the working men of this country know the truth. However ignorant of foreign languages and foreign manners these Labour Members may be—and I happen to know that their ignorance in some cases is almost bottomless—they could easily have found foreign Socialists who spoke English well, and would have told them the truth. The real facts were far more accessible to Mr. Keir Hardie or to Mr. Snowden than to most people. Yet the whole group of Labour Members were quite content to go on living as if Belgium and France and Germany were on some other planet, and to encourage their constituents in equal ignorance. But it is one of the good results of this lamentable war, that the people of Great Britain are at last willing to face many truths hitherto most unwelcome, and most steadily ignored. Facing the truth now, they will draw their own conclusions; and they will never quite forget. Therefore, the Labour Group of our next Parliament will either include a sadder and a wiser Keir Hardie and Philip Snowden; or else (sadder still) it will include no Keir Hardie and no Snowden at all. And foreign democrats will no longer come away from Great Britain half-laughing and half-mourning at the self-contented insularity of these men who have professed to stand for progressive thought, and to whom British Labour has looked for some real guidance. We shall no longer feel that "the hungry sheep look up, and are not fed."

The Swiss Workman.

After all, this Continental attitude is natural enough. In countries where nobody can flatter himself that "we run no risk," there are two reasons which tell with overwhelming force in favour of compulsory military training; efficiency demands it, and justice demands it. Firstly, efficiency demands it. The voluntary system has long been abandoned by civilized states in all other essential departments of national life. Compulsory schooling has been adopted by state after state, in proportion as each has opened its eyes to the fact that a nation's greatness must depend to a vast extent upon its education. Great Britain, which clung to the voluntary system longer than any other state of equal size and pretensions to civilization, has long recognized the folly of this delay, and is struggling now to make up the ground which she lost before 1870. The old system spelt waste and national inefficiency; the compulsory system is beginning at last to utilize all the intellectual resources of the nation. Under the old system, a few schools turned out boys of a type which no other country possessed. The "public schools," for the upper classes, had all the strength and the weakness of our voluntary army system. They taught, and still teach, a certain attitude towards life, and a certain resourcefulness, which could never be learned from mere books. The British "public school boy" compares with his

German brother very much as our soldiers compare with the German soldiers. But in education, as in war, though our quality was good, our numbers were too small. No nation which contents itself with developing a few, while it neglects the rest, can hold its own under modern competition. The introduction of compulsory education has not killed the old Public School spirit; it has supplemented it. In many directions it has forced reform upon the public schools; the rich are now compelled to increase the educational pace because the poor are treading hard upon their heels. And if, at the back of our admirable voluntary and professional army, we had a system of Compulsory Territorialism, there again the multitude would have a good deal to teach even to the select few. National compulsion in military training, as in school training, spells national efficiency. Whatever pride we justly feel in our own soldiers, let us not forget that the Liège forts were defended by conscripts and stormed by conscripts.

Again, universal service spells greater justice. With all our pride in the thousands who are now volunteering, let us not forget the still greater numbers who are not coming forward. For every man who enlists, three or four are holding back, who had apparently no better reasons for remaining than the man who has gone to the front. Moreover, many of these, if they once came forward and submitted to training, would make just as good soldiers as the rest. It is only when a nation puts *all* to school, that she finds out *all* her latent genius; and the same holds good of military qualities also. Nor need we here press equality of opportunity to the verge of injustice. There is no reason why a nation should not allow the utmost latitude to the real conscientious objector. There are many national necessities besides military training. While the overwhelming majority were doing their six months of Compulsory Territorialism, the small minority of conscientious objectors might be doing their six months of equally hard work in our civil hospitals—sweeping, carrying coals, performing all kinds of laborious service, and saving thousands of pounds to the nation, while they had the moral encouragement of ministering directly to their suffering fellow-men. Again, the financial burden might easily be met by a few more pence upon the income tax, so that the richer man should be compelled to pay, not only in person, but also in money, as he can afford to pay. The present thoroughly unjust system, by which all the burden is thrown upon the willing horse, would then be exchanged for some measure of democratic justice. It was in the name of fair play, as well as in the name of efficiency, that the Belgian Radicals forced compulsory service upon the unwilling Conservative Party.

Inexperience imagines Evil—Experience sees the Good.

Whether we like it or not, we must face a fact about which too many falsehoods have been circulated in Great Britain; it may almost be said *deliberately* circulated. **The vast majority of the voters in all continental countries are not only in favour of the compulsory principle, but even find it difficult to understand the British fear of universal service.** They argue that home defence is a national necessity—one of the fundamental necessities of all social progress. Therefore, they say, it must certainly be put upon the same business footing as all other

national necessities. If, as some assert, even six months of drill are a serious disadvantage to the individual citizen, then it is both unfair and foolish to leave this drill to individual choice. *Unfair:* for with what conscience can the Government ask one willing man to make this sacrifice for the sake of sparing seven others who are just as well able to bear it? *Foolish:* for it puts a premium, to begin with, upon unpatriotic individualism; secondly, it actually enables the shirker to pose as a more moral and a more intellectual person than the "man of blood" who is "learning to murder unoffending foreigners"; and thirdly, it ensures that, if the Territorials ever had to fight, the nation should necessarily lose a vastly disproportionate number of its bravest and most unselfish citizens, who were best fitted to be the fathers of the coming race. The volunteer spirit is a splendid spirit. That is all the more reason why a nation should not treat its volunteers as the goose that laid the golden eggs.

For the "if" upon which these last few sentences have turned is *not* true; six months' drill do *not* make a worse man or a worse citizen of the individual. In Switzerland, less than a month before the outbreak of this war, I was interviewing several of the most prominent anti-militarists of that country. One of them, who had himself done four months of prison for refusing to turn out as a soldier in time of strike, was yet free to confess that he saw no way but compulsion for efficient home defence, and that his own quarrel was not with the principle but with matters of detail.[8] Another, whom I saw at Zürich, was an uncompromising Marxian, and a devoted Internationalist.[9] Yet even he was forced to admit that not half the Swiss Socialist party could be brought to the poll against the principle of compulsory service. Twelve per cent. of the total vote of the nation was the extreme that this most enthusiastic Zürich anti-militarist thought he could muster. A few weeks later, when the Swiss Government mobilized to save the country from the fate of Belgium, it was precisely at Zürich that the representatives of different Socialists met to declare their confidence in the Government, and their hope that these preparations would be most thoroughly carried out. A few days later, I bought the weekly Socialist paper at Lausanne. This breathed the same spirit; its fiercest article was directed against the insignificant handful of "sans-patrie," of anti-patriots, who had talked of an international strike at this juncture! At the present moment, my Zürich anti-militarist would probably not claim that he could lead one per cent. to the poll against the compulsory principle. Very few British institutions of equal importance are accepted so unanimously as the army system is accepted in Switzerland. It amounts to Compulsory Territorialism, but with a far more democratic officer-system; and, so little does this compulsory six months damp the volunteer energies of the nation, that there is more extra volunteer work done in Switzerland, per head of population, than all the work done by our Territorials in peace-time.[10]

Foreign Anti-Militarism.

Such, then, is Swiss anti-militarism, and this is a type of the general Continental spirit. In Continental countries, this "we run no risk" will not do even as a parrot-cry for the platform; and therefore the voter faces national defence in a very different spirit to ours. Bebel, the

German Socialist leader, wrote a little book pleading, not for disarmament, but for the Swiss system. Anti-militarists in Russia are advocating the same. Edouard Vaillant (the oldest representative, I believe, of the French parliamentary Socialist party) committed himself some years ago to the same propaganda. Poor Jaurès never had time to write more than one great book in his busy life; and that book was, from first to last, *a plea for twice as much compulsory militarism in France as in Switzerland.* Of all the scandalous suppressions of truth, and hints of falsehood, by which the British workman has been hoodwinked during these few years past, this falsification of Jaurès's attitude is perhaps the most scandalous. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, for instance, contributes to the *Contemporary Review* for September 1914 a long article on Jaurès. It is mere froth, from beginning to end. Mr. Macdonald even misspells his hero's name every time he mentions it—twenty-nine times! He has not a word to say of Jaurès's great book, or of his attitude towards the principle of compulsory service. This is bad enough, but Mr. Philip Snowden has done even worse. In the *Morning Post* for Feb. 5th 1914 he had the hardihood to claim Jaurès for an anti-militarist in his own sense, that is, for an opponent of the compulsory principle. Lord Roberts, replying next day, met this by an absolutely conclusive quotation from Jaurès's own book, and challenged Mr. Snowden to bring any contrary evidence. Mr. Snowden, who up to that point had been most voluble and aggressive, collapsed here altogether, and offered neither reply nor apology. Readers who follow the extracts which I give later on, (or who, better still, study Jaurès for themselves), will understand clearly enough why Mr. Snowden made no further attempt to justify his mis-statement; but they will not understand why he has never offered any apology for it. The British workman has been steadily deceived on this point, and most unconscientiously deceived, by the very men to whom he has most naturally looked for true information. He has been constantly fed with violent tirades against the French long-service system by political partisans—tirades grossly exaggerated, because they were thrown off in the heat of debate. Scarcely a single British Liberal has discovered, or at any rate publicly confessed, that Jaurès and his friends, who fought so hard *against* the three years, were *in favour of* one year of compulsory service; and that they have advocated this, not as a maximum, but *as a minimum*; as the least that could be expected to guarantee national security, and therefore social progress.[11] Yet such is the fact. Continental opinion is here in astounding contrast with British opinion. The Continental working-man, like the British working-man, looks forward to a United States of Europe, in which international differences will be settled by arbitration. But he has never been dosed with this British platform soothing-syrup of "we run no risk." He sees clearly that international arbitration, like our own law courts, must rest upon some basis of physical force in the last resort. A system of arbitration which had no physical force at its disposal would simply prove a standing encouragement to fraud and violence; the villain would only need to be sufficiently consistent in his villainy, and he would win. He would only need to tear up half-a-dozen treaties—only to pillage, burn, and murder with sufficient swiftness and resolution—and he could laugh at the consequences. The United States of Europe will need a police force; and such a police force can be supplied, perfectly naturally, by simply extending a system of democratic defence which

has already proved most successful within its own limited area. Let all nations be armed, as all Continental Democracies now demand that they should be armed, upon the Swiss system.

"Mobilization means War."

So says the German Chancellor, twice over, in the German White Book, attempting thereby to justify himself. Russia (according to one-sided assertions from Germany, which are as untrustworthy as all similar statements from the same source) was the first to mobilize. Therefore—although Russia publicly undertook to suspend her mobilization if only Germany would consent to a European Conference on the Servian question—therefore it was Russia who really began this war.

But the Swiss are there to show us that mobilization need not mean war. At the news of the German ultimatum to Russia and France, Switzerland decreed immediate mobilization. She had, in a week, 200,000 armed and trained men encamped on her frontiers, in a resolute attitude of defence. Her population is only one-thirteenth of ours; therefore, putting this effort into British figures, it would be as if we had mobilized 2,600,000 trained men. All this was done without confusion, and without violent strain. The wage-earners, though they had no choice in the matter, went out upon that national duty in the spirit of volunteers. Their wives bore their own heavy burden in the same spirit in which British wives are bearing theirs. Young fellows, whose own time of compulsory training had not yet come, volunteered in great numbers. With the Swiss, as with us, political dissensions disappeared immediately. As one of their newspapers put it: "Our neutrality is guaranteed by the Powers; but it is for us all to watch over this guarantee with the utmost determination." At the little German town of Lörrach, which the French might have reached in a few hours' march if Switzerland had not been neutral, even the German authorities posted up a proclamation, in the Kaiser's name, to the effect that the inhabitants need fear no raid, "because Switzerland has mobilized." This was at the moment when Germany was besieging Liège, and when the German Chancellor was explaining to the world in general that "mobilization means war." Swiss mobilization does not mean war; it means peace. Swiss law compels every able-bodied man to turn out in defence of his country; and the Swiss War Minister, instead of begging for half a million emergency-recruits, turns out more than five times that number of trained men (in proportion to the population) with a single stroke of his pen. But there is no law enabling him to send any one of these men across the frontier: Swiss mobilization is for peace. And that is why the democracies of Europe hope for the Swiss defensive militia system as a solid stepping-stone to European peace. The United States of Europe will be policed by national defensive militias. We shall no longer say, "Germany has mobilized" .... (or perhaps, some other day, "Russia has mobilized") .... "and mobilization means war." We shall say, "All the Powers are mobilizing, and mobilization means peace." For, even at the maddest moments, the greater part of Europe has always been reluctant to be dragged into war; and, if once the Swiss system became the rule, no merely aggressive Power could hope to enforce its selfish will upon the vast defensive organization of the majority.

What killed religious warfare was not Christian charity, nor even the most convincing abstract demonstrations that you can't change a man's mind by burning him. Religious warfare only died when it became manifestly impossible to exterminate your opponents in the mass; when the opposing religious forces became so equally balanced that even fanatics were obliged to despair of success. Then they hesitated and calculated; and, when once even the bitterest enemies begin to calculate, then reason begins to do her work. When the Roman Catholics in Germany, and the Protestants in Great Britain, found it impossible to exterminate their religious enemies altogether, then they began to consider whether it would be even a Christian thing to persecute them at all.

Duelling, again, was not killed merely (or even mainly) by the most convincing arguments or by the keenest shafts of ridicule. The final determining factor was the businesslike action of the police. When the duellist found that, having escaped his opponent's pistol, he would run even greater risk from the hangman's rope, then he began to listen to argument, and to see the folly of a false code of honour.

Peace in Theory and Practice.

Jaurès saw this practical side of the question very clearly; he knew that international burglary could only be put down by a strong international police. In his scheme of an armed nation, all schoolboys are to begin their military training at the age of ten years, and he insists upon the moral value of such training. Boys would thus, he argues, grow up with a widening and deepening consciousness of their own share in the National Militia, which aims at "securing, not only their national independence, but also the peace of the world, and a new era of exalted human justice, composed of the freedom of all nations alike" (*L'Armée Nouvelle*, p. 277). And certainly this is borne out, not only by Swiss, but even by French experience. The same observation was made by other travellers who, like myself, were forced to find our way home through France during the days of mobilization. The absence of Jingoism was most remarkable; there was no pretence of wanting to go out and kill Germans, but there was a steady determination to fight this war out in defence of France. The whole spirit was as different as possible from that which France had shown before 1870, when only about a quarter of her able-bodied population were trained in arms. In Paris, the declaration of war produced no such "mafficking" as we heard of in London; and, even at the present moment, such French daily papers as I see are less sensational than our own. This last point, by itself, might give pause to those who imagine that military training develops the irresponsible combative instincts in man, and that real peaceableness of soul can be secured by blinking all possibilities of war until the last moment. The most professionally pacificist British paper has been the *Daily News and Leader*—the most aggressively pacificist paper, we may even call it. It is owned (if report be true) by members of the Society of Friends, and depends largely at all times upon Quaker support. Yet the first thing I saw on landing at Folkestone was "DAILY NEWS AND LEADER—LATE WAR EDITION!" Here, again, are a few recent headlines from this pacificist paper, taken almost at random: "Great Austrian Carnage!" —"Slaughter in East Prussia!"—"Thrilling Story of North Sea Fight:

the Enemy's Heavy Losses: Drowning German Sailors Shot by their Officers!"—"Glorious Achievements: Casualties 6000: Routed Germans Speared by Lancers and Scots Greys!" Its War Correspondent, for the honour of his paper, represents himself as prying more closely into the fighting line, and discovering more butchery, than other correspondents. Editors are generally credited with knowing pretty well what their public wants. If this be so, there can be little doubt that the average French newspaper is written for people who take a more sober estimate of the realities of war than the people who look to the *Daily News* for their mental nourishment; and this, in spite of the greater natural excitability of the French temperament. Here again, Jaurès would seem to have been abundantly right. He insisted that the armed man has generally a more serious sense of responsibility than the unarmed; that it is not so easy to talk of shooting when there are really rifles about, and when the talker might therefore be taken literally at his word (pp. 283—5). Some of the least "militarized" nations in these days are among those which show the worst yearly murder-bills.[12]

Let us have the Truth.

It is not the present writer's aim to prove that any measure must necessarily be good for Great Britain, even though in all Continental countries an overwhelming proportion of the voters approve it. Continental nations might accept it, and experience might thoroughly justify their acceptance, and yet it might conceivably not suit us. I hope (as the large majority of my readers doubtless hope) that we shall get through this war without having to fall back upon compulsory recruiting. The quarrel came at a moment when the mobilization of our fleet was almost complete. The brunt of the war fell first upon Belgium, and by far the heaviest burden of the land-fighting is still being borne by our allies. On this occasion, we may not unreasonably hope for a sufficiently long respite, to turn our emergency-recruits into soldiers of the same value as those who have already fought so splendidly. When once these are fit to send to the front, such fresh troops may well turn the scale of victory finally and decisively against the Kaiser. Moreover, the war might conceivably end even before this, though we know how mad it would be to count upon any such good fortune. We have good reason to hope, therefore, that we shall pull through *this time*. But, when this war is over, it is not likely that Great Britain will choose to go on in the old comfortable rut of "We run no risk." The question of National Defence will then come up for serious discussion; and the nation will not have forgotten, what it sees now at last, that even our Navy cannot do its best unless our land forces are sufficient. At that future time of national stock-taking, it will be of vital importance that the British voter shall have realized what the Continental democracies actually think about the policing of Europe, and what their actual experience has been. The falsehoods which have been dinned into our workmen's ears for so long, must be shown up now without delay; for now is the moment when the public will listen; when even unwelcome truths can get a hearing; when error can no longer shelter itself behind its floating mines, but must come out to fight in the open, or be beaten without a fight. Let us get our facts true, and we shall doubtless come, in due course, to some right conclusion. If we can dis-

cover some better method of securing European peace than the Continent has yet dreamt of, by all means let us lead the way. But let us no longer boast of our conservatism as if it were Progress, or of our ignorance as if it were Enlightenment. Before we finally reject the ideal of Jean Jaurès, let us at least have taken the trouble to understand it. Let us no longer delude ourselves with complacent falsehoods about that great man, who not only led the world's democratic progress, but who sealed his faith with his blood.

"The Armed Nation is the Just Nation."

So says Jaurès on p 63 of his *Armée Nouvelle*, and this sums up the argument of his whole book. In a later stage of progress (he says) we may do without armies altogether; in the present stage, a country open to invasion is a country where social progress is unsafe (pp. 5, 6). The Hague Tribunal, and other similar efforts for arbitration, are of great value, but are not enough to ensure peace (p. 8). French national character will be ennobled "when every citizen has understood, in his newer consciousness, the necessity and the beauty of military duties freed from all taint of caste or class-spirit, freed from every violent spirit of conquest, and concentrated on this one sublime object, THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE IN ORDER THAT SOCIAL JUSTICE MAY FOLLOW ITS FREE DEVELOPMENT" (p. 273: capitals his). A thorough system of universal drill in schools, followed by the universal enrolment of able-bodied citizens, will prove a most valuable factor in civic education (chaps. 8 to 10). "Military science is an essential part of the system of human knowledge," and therefore it must be taught at the universities, and also promising lads from the elementary schools must be enabled, by a system of scholarships, to study as officers (p. 385). A young man whose position or attainments mark him out for promotion, but who is still content to serve as a private, will lose some measure of public respect (p. 580). A working-class which permanently stands outside the national army system will be committing political suicide; the Democracy must show its real strength by democratizing the forces of national defence (pp. 443—44). This policy, in times of labour conflict, will not weaken but strengthen the working-classes (pp. 384, 445—49): it will give them not only a stronger external position, but more of that self-control which is essential to victory. The excuse that it doesn't matter to the workman whether he lives under a French or a German master "is too absurd to argue with." "A working-class which has shirked the duty of defending national independence (and, with that independence, its own freedom of development) will never be strong enough to fight successfully against capitalism" (p. 450). A real Armed Nation in this sense is strong, without being militarist (pp. 63, 71, 285, 325, 432—33, 442—43). In war it will be animated by the true volunteer spirit, since it is only one form of expression of the national will (p. 622). And it will have the most sustaining of convictions, that of the righteousness of its own cause: since a nation democratically organized cannot be brought into the field except for a truly national cause, and since every citizen will have been taught, from his boyhood, that his military training is not for conquest, but for international police work: not to destroy the work of the theoretical pacificist, but to lend to pacificism that practical support which alone can enable theory to bear its full fruit in action.

Stale-Mate in War.

It would seem hardly credible, and yet it is true, that attempts have been made to attack this theory of Jaurès's as self-destructive. Wiseacres have argued, "If we are all to arm millions in self-defence, while no nation is to be offensively armed, then we arrive at a patent absurdity. Against whom shall we then be arming?" In one sense this is true, in the sense that we should finally reduce war to a patent absurdity. But who will quarrel with that? How can we better destroy a thing than by proving it absurd even to the dullest mind? In no other sense is Jaurès's proposal absurd.

(1) To begin with, the United States of Europe would not yet be the United States of the World; there would still be potential enemies *outside*. Europe would still need collective military security in order to protect its own free social development. (2) And again, some time must pass before we could feel certain that this system of national militias had assured even the *internal* security of Europe. Nations could always raise volunteer expeditionary forces. We ourselves have raised half-a-million for this war, and the Germans are probably right in claiming that they have more than twice that number of volunteers. Years and years of peaceful reconstitution would be necessary, before we could be sure that the defensive forces of Europe were sufficient to meet any spirit of military adventure whatever. For a whole generation, perhaps, ambitious statesmen might cherish a hope of successful brigandage, through the sudden action of a formidable coalition, such as this present coalition of Austria and Germany. But such hopes would become fainter and fainter, as the mass of Europe settled down more steadily to the ideal of purely defensive preparations for war. A whole new world of defensive tactics and inventions would gradually take the place of the present militarist spirit. The Nations in Arms, as Jaurès often claimed, would be the Democracies trained to defend their own visible interests; the working classes would no longer merely desire peace, but would also have in their hands the means of securing peace.[13] The spirit which makes for a policy of military adventure would lose its vital force, even in a country like Prussia. It would become more and more hopeless to persuade any nation that its honour or its interest demanded the invasion of another nation. A permanent and voluntarily-recruited force of 150,000 men, however perfectly trained, would be utterly inadequate to overwhelm, by any sudden surprise, even a third-rate state. Any further call of volunteers to arms, beyond such an ordinary peace-establishment, would at once betray its own purpose, and give the peace-loving states ample time for defensive preparation. The strongest Power could never be lured on, as Germany has been, by the hope that Belgium could be overrun in a few days, and France crushed within the next few weeks by a sudden and treacherous attack. The idea of smashing Great Britain by an equally sudden and treacherous stroke—which we now know to be no mere figment of the British scaremonger, but an idea caressed even by many civilians in Germany—would become patently absurd if Germany had only a small expeditionary army, and if we had two-and-a-half-million defenders, to be mobilized at a week's notice, and long familiarized with every problem of home defence. Then, after a generation or more, Europe might begin to feel her preparations absurdly cautious. At that point, a further reduction of armaments would be

possible. But, until that time comes, let us rather be cautious even to absurdity. This would be better, at least, than the contrary absurdity of those British civilians who have long cried down their military experts as scaremongers, and who now run into still worse violence of language against the German Emperor and his advisers.

England has not always been so boastful, and so unprepared, as she has been during these last thirty years. Lord Haldane, with a very startling ignorance of our own past history, spoke recently as if we had just "muddled through" under Elizabeth, and had beaten off the Spanish Armada without any special preparation The fact is, that Harrison, a very trustworthy author, writing in 1587, estimated our force of armed citizens in that year at 1,172,674 men, each parish being ready to turn out "within an hour's warning."[14] There were critics, even in this Elizabethan England, who thought such preparations over-done. But such critics were met with one word of sturdy common-sense from a preacher of that time: "If these Spaniards come, then is our labour well spent; if they come not, it is labour well lost."

"Better to be Safe than Sorry."

This is a sailor's proverb which we may well take to heart. Great Britain, which might have been safe, is now sorry. So far are we from being fully prepared for this war, that our organization is now actually breaking down under the stress of sending off the thousands of new recruits to their different training-camps, of giving them proper food and lodging, and of supplying them even with soap and water! And those who had taken the trouble to face these facts beforehand are now saying with Mr. Robert Blatchford, not "I told you so!" but "*They* told you so!" Many of our most distinguished men had repeated the warning again and again; but you preferred to hear flattering lies The majority of independent military and naval experts told you so. Even the politicians told you so plainly enough, if only you had weighed their words as you weigh other people's words when you really want to get at the truth—when you know that your own self-interest depends on getting at the truth! The very hesitations and paltering excuses of our officials told you so. Even Lord Haldane told you so, as clearly as any lawyer and professional politician ever tells an unpalatable truth to the voter on whom he depends. He promised you "a Nation in Arms" of from 700,000 to 900,000 trained Territorials. A few months later, he told you that 315,000 would be quite enough. When he found that the recruiting fell short even of this figure by more than 50,000, then he told you that 260,000 would be enough. He told you how admirable was your National Spirit for supplying even these volunteers; and how magnificently the quality would make up for any deficiency in quantity; and how we might some day get even our 315,000; and how, after six months of war-training, these men would actually be fit to do real fighting! If your creditor had put you off like this in money matters, falling back from one excuse to another, would you have believed him? If he had promised you £7, would you have been content with less than £3, and believed that the excellent quality of these particular three sovereigns would somehow make up for the missing £4? Moreover, all this while, Lord Haldane scarcely ever made a speech in favour of the Voluntary System, without putting in a sentence or two which suggested

to every careful reader that the Voluntary System could no more secure efficient national defence than it had secured efficient national education. He carefully sugared the pill, of course; and you carefully sucked off the sugar and spat out the pill. But, in his own sleek way, he told you the truth almost as plainly as Herr Krupp and the German Emperor were telling it after their own fashion; only you would not see it; you preferred to be deceived. Those who then refused to be safe are now openly sorry.

Hitherto, however, the British working-classes have had a reasonable excuse for ignoring facts that are faced by all the Continental working-classes. Britons have been intent upon other things, and things of the utmost importance. Their leaders, whom they trusted, have not only concealed vital truths, but have also told plain falsehoods—unintentionally, of course, but none the less mischievously and suicidally. Those falsehoods are dying easily enough now, for the nation is at last in earnest. A whole new horizon opens out now before the British working-man. He will now ask himself, without prejudice, whether real social progress is possible without national defence; and whether national defence can be secured by any country whose Democracy will not make this business their own. Compulsory service may not logically follow even then. If any system more efficient and truly democratic can be devised, let us by all means have this other system for Great Britain But at least, in our search for that kind of army which shall best express the people's will, which best shall mould the people's character, and which best shall secure the people's tranquillity—at least, in this our search, let us remember the words which Jaurès applied to all European nations except our own. "In every country," he wrote, "the whole instinct and reflection of the working-classes runs against [the voluntary system]. Everywhere it is the working-man, the Socialist, who demands military service for the whole population" (p. 444).

NOTES.

[1] *The Labour Leader* for August 27th gives its approval to what it calls "a Remarkable Letter," in which the writer says, "We know now that Belgian independence was guaranteed by Germany, and is in no danger." On the same page is an article by Mr. Ramsay Macdonald discussing the causes of the war, and claiming "to go right down to the foundation of things." *In his three columns of print, Mr. Macdonald does not even mention the word Belgium.*

[2] There is an exact parallel in the life of the Kaiser's ancestor, Frederick the Great, upon whose unscrupulous policy most of the present German government is modelled: "At length he sent her (Maria Theresa) a message which could be regarded only as an insult. If she would but let him have Silesia, he would, he said, stand by her against any power which should try to deprive her of her other dominions; *as if he was not already bound to stand by her, or as if his new promise could be of more value than the old one.*"—Macaulay, *Frederic the Great.*

[3] This has, of course, been seized upon by the Germans. *The Times* of Sept. 16th gives, under the heading of "Fictions against Great Britain," the following Marconi news from Berlin. "A violent manifesto has been issued by the Independent Labour Party of Great Britain, declaring that Great Britain is fighting neither on behalf of an oppressed nation nor on behalf of Belgian neutrality." Yet this particular piece of news is, as the reader has seen, only too true; for once there was no need in Berlin to mistate the facts; the I.L.P. circular served their purpose without the least exaggeration.

[4] The official manifesto of the Italian Socialists to the German Socialist delegates puts this home-truth very bluntly; it is printed fully in *l'Humanité* for Sept. 7th, and more briefly in the *Manchester Guardian* for Sept. 14th. "The victory of the Kaiser," says this Italian manifesto, "would mean the victory of German militarism, against which German Socialism has been unable to fight; for it has contented itself with gaining a few electoral successes and a few material advantages, without exercising any real political influence in Germany." Compare *The Times* for Sept. 25th: "The Socialist party at Leipzig state that 10,835 members, 26 per cent. of the total membership, are at the front. Michael Schwartz, the Socialist leader, has been decorated with the Iron Cross."

[5] *Daily Citizen*, Sept. 9th, 1914: "Was there an international movement called Socialism? . . . Whatever there was, a word spoken by one man dissolved it into warring elements and thin air. It is exactly as if there had been no such organisation and no such movement. When one admits that the dream of world-fraternity has not prevented war, not even in the least degree embarassed those who made war, not changed anything, the worst is still unsaid. Its prophet-interpreters go to war like other men one against another, Liebknecht against Vandervelde. That means more. Socialism not only did not count, but could not have deserved to count. Its reputation of war was a sentiment too weak, and without guidance, clearly." (*Article by K. Snowden*).

[6] This was printed in full in *l'Humanité* for Sept. 6th. It does not seem to have found its way into British papers. It is a document of great force and dignity, far more restrained, and far less mortifying to German pride, than the very outspoken Socialist manifesto from neutral Italy.

[7] (A) *Statement approved as correct by all my informants in Belgium, without exception, and translated in the text of this pamphlet:*

Il y a plus de 30 ans que le parti libéral en Belgique réclame le service militaire **obligatoire et généralisé.**

Cette réclamation a fait partie de la plateforme libérale aux dernières élections (1912); mais le parti conservateur y a alors résisté de toutes ses forces.

Toutefois, s'étant maintenu au pouvoir en 1912, le parti conservateur a dû envisager autrement les choses; et c'est lui qui a voté la loi du service militaire obligatoire (sauf exemptions confessionnelles), avec l'aide d'une partie de l'opposition libérale, qui a cependant protesté contre les exemptions non-justifiées.

Le parti socialiste a accepté aussi **le principe,** tout en réclamant des modifications très importantes (service de six mois, avancement démocratique d'officiers, etc., etc.); en un mot, l'idéal du parti socialiste, c'est la "nation armée," en prenant pour modèle la milice suisse. Mais, une fois arrivé là, le parti socialiste n'a pas la moindre idée de détruire les principes de 1) l'obligation et 2) l'universalité. Il soutient le système suisse comme **minimum,** en attendant la possibilité de l'arbitrage et du désarmement général; et il admet, avec le parti libéral, que, tant qu'il faudra une armée quelconque, il faut bien que cette armée comprenne **toute la population,** sauf les exceptions nécessaires pour cause de faiblesse physique, ou de soutiens de famille.

Une fois votée, la loi n'a plus rencontré d'opposition sérieuse **en principe**; le pays entier s'y est facilement résigné, hormis l'opposition socialiste, qui se base sur le système de la "nation armée" (système suisse).

Il n'y a surtout aucune association ouvrière **libérale ou socialiste** qui ait combattu **le principe** de la loi. Les associations qui l'ont combattu, sont des associations conservatrices.

En effet, les associations conservatrices, bourgeoises ou ouvrières, ont de tout temps combattu le service militaire généralisé. Et, si elles ont cessé cette opposition en 1912, ce n'est qu'entraînées par la force des choses, ainsi que ses élus l'ont déclaré à la Chambre des Représentants.

(B) *Names of informants:*

Belgium.—Three Deputies, viz., MM. Ed. Anseele (Soc.), Albert Mechelynck (Rad.) and Georges Lorand (Rad.); two Professors at the University of Ghent, both members of the Radical Party, MM. Paul Fredericq and H. Pirenne; and the following other gentlemen: the Secretary of the Liberal Association of Ghent; M. Arthur Verschraegen, Provincial Councillor and Secretary to the Ghent branch of the Belgian Labour Party; M. A. van Werveke, Administrator of the three museums at Ghent; the two well-known Ghent booksellers, MM. de Tavernier (22, rue Courte du Jour) and van Goethem (1, rue

des Foulons); the Concierge of the Maison du Peuple (Socialist Headquarters) at Brussels.

France.—M. Albert Thomas, Deputy for the Champigny division of the Seine; Commandant Rossel, Military Correspondent of *l'Humanité*; M. Ed. Nimier, Professor of Physics at the Lycée of St. Omer, and a prominent member of the Radical-Socialist party in that town.

In addition to these well-known gentlemen, I showed the above printed statement of the Socialist attitude to many casual fellow-travellers, waiters at hotels, etc., and was everywhere assured that the statement was correct. Dr. Paul Hamelius's version on p. 25 of his "Siege of Liège" (Werner Laurie, 1914, 1*s*.) is very misleading here. It is true that the King, in the last resort, broke down Conservative resistance to National Defence in 1913 by warning the ministry plainly that Belgium could not count entirely upon the Powers' guarantees for her neutrality, but must also be able to defend herself. Yet the King could have done nothing but for the fact that the Liberal party had been hammering at this subject for thirty years, and had taken all the odium of being held up as "militarists" before the electorate. My frontispiece gives a facsimile of two pictures which, published by the Conservatives, did much to secure the Liberal defeat at the elections of 1912, especially in the less educated country districts. Yet, when the victorious Conservatives proceeded to "dish the Whigs" by bringing in, as a ministry, a proposal for compulsory service almost identical with that which they had combated at the elections, the Liberals, as a party, showed their patriotism by supporting the government. The only important difference between the two proposals was, that the Conservatives exempt about five per cent. of the able-bodied youths from service, mainly for religious reasons. Bearing this in mind, the reader will better understand what Dr. Hamelius says on p. 27 about the abuses of the old semi-voluntary system.

Coming to his description of this present war, the author is far more plain-spoken. On pp. 51—54 he writes: "Never was the need for military training in a nation more sadly exemplified than in the rise of national pride and anguish that the German challenge called forth among us. We all wanted to be useful, and envied our lucky soldiers who knew their place and duty. But the larger part of our manhood was without guidance and knowledge. The younger men could enlist, and did so in large numbers. All classes, from the aristocracy to the people, showed themselves worth their salt. At best it meant six weeks' training near Antwerp before they were fit to take the field. And we all knew that six weeks' delay was fatal. They went all the same. . . . . The most tragic example of the breakdown of untrained goodwill in the face of a sudden emergency was that of the civil guard . . . . . Let this be a warning to men who think it sufficient to love their country, without learning in times of peace how to defend it in times of danger . . . . . In half a century's time the Liégeois will still remember with loathing that he, or some one of his people, has once been compelled to keep the pigs and cows for the German army."

[8] This was expressly stated in the official manifesto of the Swiss Socialist Party during the recent mobilization, printed in the *Berner Tagwacht* for Aug. 3rd. "We have never" (it says) "combated our Militia System in itself."

[9] For instance, he was convinced that an unprovoked attack of Germany upon Britain would at once cause a revolution among German Socialists, who would rise in arms against their own Government; a belief common enough until recently among us, but very rare among Swiss Labour Leaders.

[10] Germany also at this moment is raising very large numbers of volunteers—the *Times* military correspondent, usually well informed, says 1,250,000—and she is laughing with some justice at our Pharisaical boast that Britain alone has the true Volunteer spirit.

[11] One of the worst offenders here is Mr. C. P. Trevelyan, late Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, in his pamphlet entitled *Democracy and Compulsory Service*. As he refused a public discussion with me, I was obliged to expose his methods in a counter-pamphlet entitled *True Liberalism and Compulsory Service* (Miles and Co., 68 Wardour Street, price 1*d*., or 2*d*. post free). An honourable exception to Liberal silence on this subject may be found in the *Nation* for May 26th, 1911, which contains a favourable review of Jaurès's book.

[12] Of all the white races, by far the least militarized are the United States of America. Here only about one in 200 of the population is armed in peace time; in Great Britain the proportion is one in 70. Yet murders in the U.S.A. are *more than*

three times more numerous, in proportion to the population, than in Great Britain, and *nearly three times as numerous* as in Germany (Mulhall, *Dictionary of Statistics*, 1899, pp. 162, 172). Of great world-nations, China is by far the least militarized; only one person in 2,000 bears arms in times of peace. Yet there is scarcely any nation in which human life is so cheap as in China. Here, for instance, is an extract from the *Daily Citizen* of Dec. 11th, 1913:

"Men's Lives at £6 each.

"According to a list of indemnities for the loss of life and property during the recent rebellion at Shanghai, the life of an adult person in China is valued at £6 . . .

"A list of compensations for the district round Shanghai has been sanctioned by Yuan Shi Kai, the President . . .

"38 adults at £6 each; 6 children at £3 each; 11 seriously wounded at £4 each; 9 slightly wounded at £2 each. Thus the death of a child is accounted of less importance than the wounding of a man."

Compare this with a few sentences from Jack's "New Encyclopedia," p. 358: "Infanticide was at one time extremely common (in China), especially in the case of girls, most families killing all their offspring except two boys and one girl. This state of things has recently improved; and, as a rule, young children are not murdered except in times of famine."

[13] From an article by Edouard Vaillant, "father" of the Socialist group in the French Parliament, in *L'Humanité* for Sept. 16th, 1914:

Vaillant begins by complaining that other political parties, noting the hearty unanimity with which the Socialists are throwing themselves into the present war, are beginning to suggest that Socialism is repenting of its opposition to the Three Years' Training Bill. To this he replies that his party intends to support the country through thick and thin until this war is ended, and then to resume its campaign for a One-Year Defensive Militia System. He writes:

"Then we will begin again to preach our own ideas, unchanged in their essence, but developed by the history and the criticism of this present war. We will then show the incomparable value of these ideas for the defensive organization of the country on the principle of a "Nation in Arms," drilled from its youth upwards, without interruption, until the citizen's fiftieth year, and organized in a militia which will include all able-bodied citizens without exception. We shall thus bring into play, for national defence, no longer a part of the population only (however great that part may be), but the whole forces of the nation, down to the last man. We will then explain the full value of an organization on the Swiss model, better and more democratic than our present system, and resting upon a methodical fortification of the frontier, in combination with which it will render all invasion impossible. And here again we repeat that which poor Jaurès and I used to maintain on this subject. For we are certain that this truth, embodying the military basis of a democratic defensive policy, must soon be universally recognized, and must be applied throughout a Europe delivered from the tyranny and from the evils of militarism. The democracies of Europe, having conquered Imperialism, will democratize their army systems, as they will democratize their political and social systems."

These last sentences are especially noteworthy. For Vaillant, as for Jaurès, a democratic system of compulsory service does not spell militarism, but *the opposite of militarism*. The Swiss system is the ideal held up to the democracies of Europe, when they shall have broken down the present reign of brute force.

[14] *Elizabethan England*. Ed. by F. J. Furnivall. (Walter Scott & Co. pp. 224—25.) It is very likely that Harrison has here exaggerated somewhat; but of the main facts there can be no doubt.

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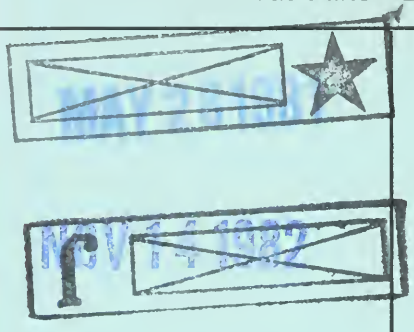

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